

## Minutes of the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2017 St. Giles PCC meeting

**Present:** Fr. Mark Crowther-Alwyn (Chair), Allan Preston, Brian Legood, Bridget Caudle, Claire Drabble, Emily Brailsford, Helen Legood, Jackie Steele, Jean Haines, Joan Link, Martin Smith, Michael Amos, Peter Steele, Sue Grant-Nicholas.

**Visitor:** Revd. Dr. David Mundby, Parish Resource Officer

Fr. Mark opened proceedings with a reading from the Letter of St Peter

### **41/17. Apologies.**

Apologies had been received from Sarah Higgs and Jane Pomphrey. Angela Neale had apologised that she would be late arriving, but in fact didn't make the meeting.

### **42/17. Revd. Dr. David Mundby, Diocesan Parish Resource Officer.**

Fr. Mark introduced Fr. Mundby, who had been asked to give us some advice on parish financial resources. In introduction, Fr. Mark quoted the oft heard phrase that 'St Giles has loads of money, let's spend it', reminding PCC members that we have seen a drop in income, had some serious financial commitments recently – with potentially more on the way, and we were facing an increase in our contribution to the Common Fund. We need to think round how we give to the church and how we steward what we've got. Joan referred to the suggested move to cash flow accounting and financial planning for the longer term. Sue referred to the annual problem of allocating the charitable giving pot and queried whether Fr. Mundby could offer any advice about the percentage a parish should be giving to charitable causes. It was felt that a discussion on this topic alone could occupy the whole meeting and was better left until the next round of charitable giving.

Fr. Mundby then explained his role within the diocese. He pointed out that many parishes were struggling with financial issues and having difficulties in recruiting and keeping a treasurer because of the complexities of church finance. He followed this by leading us through a questionnaire about parish finances. He emphasised that 'stewardship' was not just about money. It also involved stewarding the regular members of the congregation and what he termed 'friends' of the church, on the periphery, e.g. parents of the children at the church school, members of the community who value the presence of the parish church. There is a need to establish better means of communication with such people. One interesting suggestion arising from that was introducing the practice of thanking regular contributors by a letter. Allan pointed out that this used to be the case when it was necessary to get a signature to authorise gift aid, but with the changed arrangements, the sending of letters to donors had ceased. It was agreed that perhaps it was time to introduce something similar.

Another issue was the need for the PCC to produce a budget. Amongst other more obvious things, the budget should identify how the expenditure would contribute towards ministry and mission. An example cited was that expenditure on heating, i.e. cutting down on the amount of heating would reduce the likelihood of organisations like the school using the church for worship or part of the curriculum. The budget needs to link money to the work of the church. 'Budgets are theology in action'.

Fr. Mundby then outlined the newly introduced Parish Giving Scheme. This is a centrally organised arrangement whereby parishioners arrange to give a monthly sum on direct debit, with the option of having this automatically increased on an annual basis in line with inflation. If the donor is a tax payer and the donation is eligible for gift aid, this is again arranged centrally and the parish concerned will get the donation and the gift aid remitted to their account on a monthly basis. He felt this was especially useful for small parishes, many of whom had never claimed gift aid or were well behind in their claims. There was some discussion about how this scheme would work and whether the users of the envelope scheme could (and should) be brought into the PGS. From the point of view of a treasurer, there is no doubt that using the PGS should simplify matters, though initially it may

complicate things until all regular donors/envelope scheme members became part of the PGS. Fr. Mundby stressed that all the money received by the scheme is passed to the parish. There is no 'top slicing' by the diocese. Noting that the PGS would reduce the administrative burden on the Treasurer, it was agreed that this should be discussed further at the Standing Committee.

Copies of the questionnaire and a note on the PGS were handed out at the meeting and both paper and electronic copies are available on request.

Fr. Mundby concluded by saying that he hoped his visit had been useful and that he would be happy to come back at a later date to discuss the various issues raised.

Fr. Mark thanked Fr. Mundby for attending and said that he felt we had learned a great deal and would be following up on some of the suggestions. The PCC members endorsed these sentiments.

**Resolved: To remit further consideration of the questionnaire and Parish Giving Scheme to the Standing Committee.**

#### **43/17. Minutes of meetings 28/3/17 and 26/4/17**

The minutes of the meetings held on 28/3/17 and 26/4/17 were approved as a correct record and signed by Fr. Mark

#### **44/17. Correspondence**

There was no correspondence as such, but Fr. Mark has received an e.mail from Fr. John which stated that he would like to attend PCC meetings but as he was no longer licenced to officiate at services he would not wish to be a member or vote. It was agreed that Fr. John should attend PCC meetings as an observer and would be allowed to speak, but not to vote.

**Resolved: To ask Fr. John to attend PCC meetings as an observer, allowing him to speak but not to vote.**

#### **45/17. Financial Statement**

Peter Steele apologised that he had no financial statement, because his computer had been down for some time. (He was expecting a new one on 17<sup>th</sup> May). A statement would be available for discussion at the next meeting of the Standing Committee.

He wanted to take a serious look at planned giving in the near future. (*This could be tied in with the various suggestions outlined in minute 42/17 above*).

#### **46/17. Church Roof and French Drain**

Peter noted that the first tranche of money had been paid to the contractors. This covered work to the roof and the French drain. The 2<sup>nd</sup> bill is awaited, including a bill from the architects. The accounts will show a substantial draw on the General Fund, because this is the only fund on which cheques can be written. Money will then be transferred from the roof fund to the General Fund.

#### **47/17. Refurbishing the bells**

Investigations are ongoing. There is a subscription scheme of £5 per month towards minor repairs/improvements and gift aid has added £40 to the total so far. Anyone wishing to make a similar contribution may do so. It is not limited to members of the ringing team.

#### **48/17. Barn Committee Report**

In the light of the report of the Barn Committee to the APCM, it was agreed that the Barn Committee be reconstituted as the Meeting Place Committee with a remit to look at possibility of holding a lot of current activities in the church as well as looking at options for the Barn itself. Any proposals for work in the church or barn would be brought back to the PCC for decision. It was agreed that the following people should be on the committee: Angela Neale, Brian Legood, Bridget Caudle, Emily Brailsford, Martin Smith, Peter Steele, Sarah Higgs and Fr. Mark.

**Resolved:**

**a) To reconstitute the former Barn Committee to examine;**  
    **.where best to have meeting/activity space; in the Church or in the Barn and**  
    **.to consider the options for and costs of providing such a space.**

**b) To appoint Angela Neale, Brian Legood, Bridget Caudle, Emily Brailsford, Martin Smith, Peter Steele and Sarah Higgs and Fr. Mark as members of the committee**

**Action: Fr. Mark to ensure a meeting is held as soon as possible**

*Fr. Mark forgot to report to the meeting that on Friday 26th May a representative of the DAC will be visiting the Church at 9.15 am to meet the Barn Committee members. Obviously members of the New Committee are welcome to attend.*

**49/17. Admission of Children to Holy Communion**

This item followed on from Emily's presentation to the March meeting of the PCC, copies of which have been circulated. Fr. Mark made clear that it is not in the PCC's gift to do this unilaterally. All we can do, if we are minded to run with the proposal, is to ask the bishop for permission to formulate a scheme. Fr. Mark expressed the view that he was in favour of making such a request, but that he would wish to see some sort of rules applied so that only children who could demonstrate a reasonable amount of understanding about the importance and meaning of the Eucharist, would be allowed to receive communion. He felt that allowing children to take communion would eventually further improve the relationship with the school and also make the children feel more part of the worshipping community. He pointed out that there is no theological link between confirmation and communion, citing the practice in the Orthodox Church as an example and pointing out that the CofE insistence on confirmation before communion was of relatively recent origin.

A lively discussion then ensued and needless to say there were some firmly held views on both sides. After it was made clear that there would be a minimum age limit set (7 was suggested), and that before a child could receive communion they would have to demonstrate evidence of understanding, plus be a regular attender at services, Godly Play etc, it was proposed by Martin Smith and seconded by Michael Amos, that we should apply to the Bishop of Derby for permission to formulate a scheme admitting children to communion in advance of them being confirmed. On being put to the vote, the proposal was carried with 11 votes in favour and 3 abstentions.

**Resolved: To apply to the Bishop of Derby for permission to formulate a scheme admitting children to communion in advance of them being confirmed.**

**50/17. Safeguarding**

Joan reported that all members of the PCC should have a DBS check as each of us is in the same position as a charity trustee. Joan will e.mail the necessary forms to PCC members to fill in as appropriate. We noted that Fr. Mark, Angela, Bridget, and Emily had already gone through this process. Joan pointed out that was to be a television documentary about safeguarding in Rochdale later on Tuesday evening.

**51/17. Sanctuary Lamp**

Tor Electrical have given a quote of £696, including VAT, for the electrification of the Sanctuary lamp and its reinstallation. Part of this cost is the hire of scaffolding. It was noted that Mr. Loveday had initially offered assistance towards the cost of reinstating the lamp and he would be approached again now that the quote had been received. However, it was felt that the price was higher than had been anticipated and Emily said she would get two more quotes. We also noted that the lamp was a replacement for one which had been stolen some time ago, the original having been presented to the church as a memorial to those killed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War.

**Action: Emily to get two further quotes**

### **52/17. Television in Barn**

The 'new' television in the Barn has been offered to us for £50 by Emily's husband. It was decided to accept this generous offer. (Emily abstained from the discussion and decision). Helen and Brian undertook to dispose of the old television, either to a charity shop or to the tip.

**Resolved: To purchase the television for £50.**

**Actions; Treasurer to arrange purchase. Brian and Helen to dispose of old television.**

### **53/17. Garden Party**

Fr. Mark read out Sarah's report about the garden party.

It was decided not to bother with the 'posy in a jar' competition as so few had bothered to enter last year.

As for assistance in the children's area, Claire will put a request on the weekly news sheet and Fr. Mark will make an announcement at the Family service on Sunday.

Val Allcock will help Joan Link, Michael, Emily and Fr. John will look after the book stall, Jason and Nichola will do the bric-a-brac,

Hannah would be asked on Sunday if she'd do the 'Hunt the £20' stall.

There is still a question about the staffing of the guided tours of the tower.

Some preparation can be done the day before. Wine is required for the hamper and gifts for the raffle can be left at the back of the church in the box provided.

Joan Link is doing the advertising and she appealed to everyone to invite their friends and families to get the widest possible audience.

### **54/17. Working Party round church and Barn**

Peter Steele volunteered to organise a working party. Brian will operate the brush cutter.

Noted that there is a tree growing out of the wall of the Lady Chapel. This should be cut down and the stump poisoned. Helen agreed to sort this out.

The bad state of the access into the Barn car park was also raised. A temporary job can be done again, but it really needs a proper repair. Bridget agreed to get a quote from Hannah.

**Actions: Peter Steele to organise a working party; Helen to organise the removal of the tree from the Lady chapel wall; Bridget to get a quote for the repair of the barn access.**

### **55/17. Urgent further business**

It was suggested that the Secretary should write to Peter Taylor, thanking him for his work as Churchwarden, and his previous work as Deputy Warden and server.

**Action: Secretary to write to Peter Taylor (DONE)**

### **56/17. Dates of next meetings**

- Standing Committee 20th June
- PCC 18th July
- PCC 19<sup>th</sup> September

NB The following items on the agenda were not discussed through lack of time and will be held over to the next meeting.

- Handrail along footpath
- Quinquennial Inspection Issues
- Property Inventory